

Webpage creation and optimization for Efika Oy

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<p>This Bachelor's product-based thesis is about creating new web pages and search engine optimization that is commissioned by a construction company Efika Oy. The new pages will introduce brand new, pre-market apartment listings built by Efika. The main objective is to create new pages to be fully-functioning and visually attractive with good user experience. The second objective is to improve Efika's website on-page SEO score.</p> <p>This thesis starts with an introduction including information about the commissioner and outlining the objectives and delimitations. This thesis also presents theory about website design, user experience and search engine optimization focusing on on-page search engine optimization.</p> <p>The next part of this thesis is to plan the webpage structure, design, and the search engine optimization improvements. This step also includes creating mock-ups of the new pages. The mock-ups were used in interviews with four people to obtain feedback and make changes to the plan. This chapter also includes an SEO analysis of the commissioner's website. This was done to gain knowledge about the needed improvements, and it was used to compare the results of the improvement efforts.</p> <p>The implementation of the plan is the following step in this thesis. The implementation includes taking the feedback in the planning stage into the consideration and using that as a basis of creating the new pages. The implementation stage also includes the search engine optimization improvements and the analysis of them.</p> <p>The last step is the discussion of the whole thesis including the future suggestions to the commissioner, challenges faced during the project and self-reflection.</p>	
Keywords webpage creation, webpage, webpage design, website design, search engine optimization, SEO	

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Commissioner	1
1.2	Objectives	2
1.3	Delimitations	2
2	Website design and on-page search engine optimization	4
2.1	Website creation	4
2.2	Weebly	5
2.3	Website design	5
2.3.1	Balance	6
2.3.2	The Colour Theory	6
2.3.3	Typography	7
2.3.4	User experience	8
2.4	Website optimization	11
2.4.1	Keywords	11
2.4.2	Keyword research	12
2.4.3	Metadata	14
3	Plan for the website design and SEO improvements	16
3.1	Methodology	16
3.2	Target group	17
3.3	Website structure	17
3.4	Webpage design	19
3.5	Mock-ups	21
3.6	Feedback	22
3.7	SEO	23
3.8	Summary	26
4	Creating the web pages and SEO improvements	27
4.1	Structure and design of the new web pages	27
4.2	Mobile optimization	32
4.3	SEO	33
4.4	Analysis of SEO improvements	35
	Discussion	37
	References	40

1 Introduction

This is a product-based thesis commissioned by the construction company Efika Oy. The main objective is to create a well-functioning web page for their existing website since they will start offering new services. The commissioner was found through my network as I had previously created a website for them. They had a need for a new page and asked me to work on their existing website as I had already done work for them previously. We agreed to do this for my thesis. I also decided to work with search engine optimization since I gained more knowledge about this through some courses that I took. I knew that this had not been done and it would be a valuable addition and drive more traffic to their website.

This thesis focuses on the web design and creating a visually attractive webpage. Web design is very important for companies. A good website is important for a company's first impression. People judge the credibility of a company based on the visual website design. Furthermore, design takes 75% of website credibility. (Storm 2020.) A website reflects on the brand image of a company. Good website design can be useful with getting leads and conversion. It is also a big factor when it comes to user experience. (Smart Insights 2020.)

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. Chapter 2 is the theoretical framework of this thesis that discusses website design and what to keep in mind when you want to create a visually attractive website. It also includes theory about search engine optimization with a focus on on-page optimization. Chapter 3 consists of the plan for the webpage creation and the design. Chapter 4 includes the implementation of the plan. Chapter 5 discusses the results of the thesis, future development and my own reflection of the project.

1.1 Commissioner

This thesis is commissioned by a construction company Efika Oy. They are located in Lappeenranta, Finland. Efika is a new company, founded in 2018. Their values as a business are listening to their customers, being flexible and focusing on the customer's needs. One of their main selling points is building efficiently and offer sustainable options. The idea is that building efficiently benefits the customer in the long-term as well as increases profits.

Efika Oy's customers include businesses and individuals. They currently offer three different services: residential building, property developing and business premises building. They will begin developing a new apartment building and they need to pre-market the

apartments beforehand. For this, Efika needs new pages on their website. They need a page to show all the different apartment listings that they will soon offer.

For this thesis, I will create fully functioning pages on the commissioner's current website that includes all the apartment listings. I will also work on search engine optimization.

1.2 Objectives

The main objective of this thesis is to create a visually pleasing, user-friendly, clear, and working page for Efika's website. The measurement of success is done by interviewing people for feedback and commissioner feedback. The page must also be made in a way that it is easy to edit and update by their employees in the future.

The second objective is to optimize the website for search engines. Improving the overall SEO score of the website will help the company's ranking in search engines which will be beneficial in promoting the new apartment listings. Neil Patel's SEO analyser will be used to measure the success of this objective. More specifically, the objective is to fix the issues the SEO analyser gives about Efika's website and add relevant keywords.

Efika's objective is to have an updated website ready for potential customers. They want the website to have all the necessary information of the apartments on the page. They need it to be easy for them to update when needed. The page needs to look visually attractive and easy to navigate. Efika also wants the website to have information of the new listings on the front page so that visitors will see that they offer apartments as soon as they land on the website. This way it may add sales and improve the user experience, making the new information easily accessible. This is where improvements of the SEO come into the picture. When consumers look for investing into apartments or they want to buy an apartment for themselves, it's important that Efika will be shown on the search engines. Optimizing the website can bring new visitors and therefore may bring new leads and sales.

1.3 Delimitations

Since Efika already has a website and it doesn't need to be created from the start, theory from building a website from the start won't be studied that much. The theoretical framework mostly focuses on the design elements and the user experience of websites.

Search engine optimization is a large topic to cover and it would be impossible for me to make improvements in all aspects of SEO. I will focus on only on-page SEO. Furthermore,

I will only improve the technical side of SEO with a focus on keywords and metadata. Because of this, theory will mostly be studied on these topics.

2 Website design and on-page search engine optimization

Having a website is crucial for any business these days. Not having a website means missing out on opportunities for customers to find you and decide if they want to do business with you (Leinbach-Reyhle, 2014). A website can be a big factor in customer journey for companies. Customer journey is the process that a consumer goes through to make a purchase or equivalent goal that a company has (Agius 2019). Understanding customer journey in website design gives insight into how it affects customers' decision-making process (Growth-Driven Design). In customer journey, there are many touchpoints. Touchpoints are interactions between a customer and a business. A website can be an important touchpoint for a business. Touchpoints can include all the steps that led a customer to the website, what they did on a website and what they did after. While on the website, touchpoints can include watching a product demo, filling out a check-out form, making a purchase and giving feedback. (Nagornov 2019.)

Many people do research online first when deciding whether they want to do business with you or not. Therefore, increasing visibility online is an important factor for businesses. A website is accessible for customers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Customers can find the information they need at their convenience. A website is a valuable resource of information about a business' products and services that otherwise would only be available during business hours. (Jackson 2012.)

This chapter focuses on discussing the theories and practises of building a functioning webpage for a business. It also includes rules that can be applied to make a website more visually pleasing and how to improve the user experience. This chapter also discusses search engine optimization with a focus on on-page search engine optimization.

2.1 Website creation

All websites are made from individual pages. There are two types of websites: static and dynamic. Static website is a website that does not change depending on the user's actions. Static refers to something that is fixed. Dynamic websites tend to be more functional. They allow users to interact with the given information. (Staff 2019.)

Most websites, whether they consist of only text or pictures, are written in HTML which means HyperText Markup Language. HTML informs browsers how to show all the contents of a web page. It uses special instructions that are called tags to guide the browser whether to start a paragraph, show a picture or make text bold for example. (McDonald 2011, 20.)

2.2 Weebly

Weebly is a web hosting service that is used in this thesis. There are no coding skills needed, but they have the option to customize a website using HTML, CSS or JavaScript. First, one needs to sign up and choose whether they want just a website or an online store. Then they need to select a theme for the website. After choosing the theme, domain should be chosen. Domain is the name of a website and appears in the website address. (Weebly.) Efika's website address is efika.fi.

When all this is set up, one can start designing the website. Weebly has a website builder page that allows you to edit text, images, background, and other elements. The website builder works by using the drag and drop method. (Weebly.) Figure 1 showcases the website builder platform.

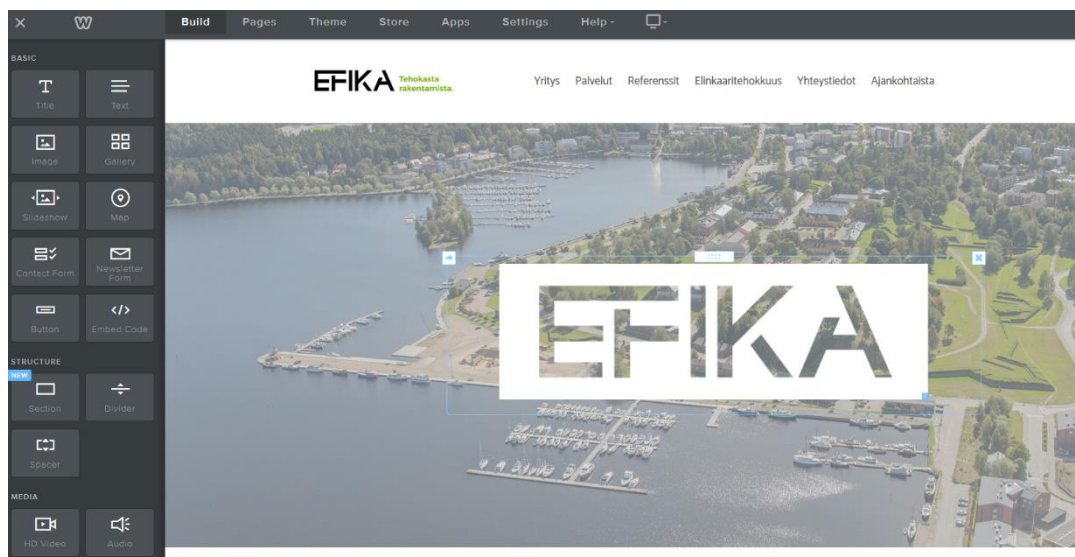


Figure 1. Screenshot of Weebly's website builder platform. (Weebly.)

2.3 Website design

Designing a website that looks good is important for a business. There are websites created daily and it is critical to have a website that is visually attractive. Designing a website can be seen as a form of art, but there are also some rules that can be applied. (JotForm 2020.) The Web is always changing and it's important to keep up with the changes. The best websites keep evolving and improving. New features can be added, the designs can be updated according to new trends and there should always be new content. This is why it should be designed to be easily modified. (McDonald 2011, 15.)

Digital design should incorporate all the relevant information to be able to create a useful and engaging experience. To create a seamless user experience, content, technology, interaction design and navigation should be well combined. What helps a designer to create the best possible design is having completed content. (Frick & Eyler-Werve 2015, 64.)

2.3.1 Balance

There should be a balance when designing a website. Keeping a design balanced means that there is an achieved symmetry or asymmetry in visual weight. A visual weight can be manipulated in many ways, such as size, colour and adding or removing elements.

Achieving an asymmetrical balance can be a difficult task and it requires some time and visualization to succeed. However, despite possibly being harder, it can make a design look more playful. (JotForm 2020.)

Using grids is a way to make sure a design is balanced. Grids are a sequence of vertical and horizontal rulers and can help to compartmentalize a design. Columns can be an example of using grids. They improve readability and make the content of a website easier to comprehend. (JotForm 2020.)

2.3.2 The Colour Theory

Colours are an important factor in a design and the colour theory can be used when designing a website. The colour theory is both the art and science of the usage of colour. How people perceive colour, how colours mix, match and contrast together and what the colours communicate, can be explained by colour theory. (Decker 2017.)

Colours on a website should not be chosen at random. Colours are important when building a brand (Decker 2017). When thinking about McDonalds, most likely the colour yellow comes to mind. When thinking about Coca-Cola, red and white are associated. A website should not have too many different colours. There should normally be two to three colours that go well together and look good. (JotForm 2020.)

The colour wheel is used to develop colour harmonies and palettes and mixing colours. Figure 2 below shows what a colour wheel looks like. When separating the wheel vertically, you will get warm colours on one side and cool colours on the other. Warm colours tend to be associated with brightness, action and energy while the cool colours with serenity, peace and calmness. (Decker 2017.) Choosing which colour to use in a website or design can have an influence on the message a business is trying to tell.

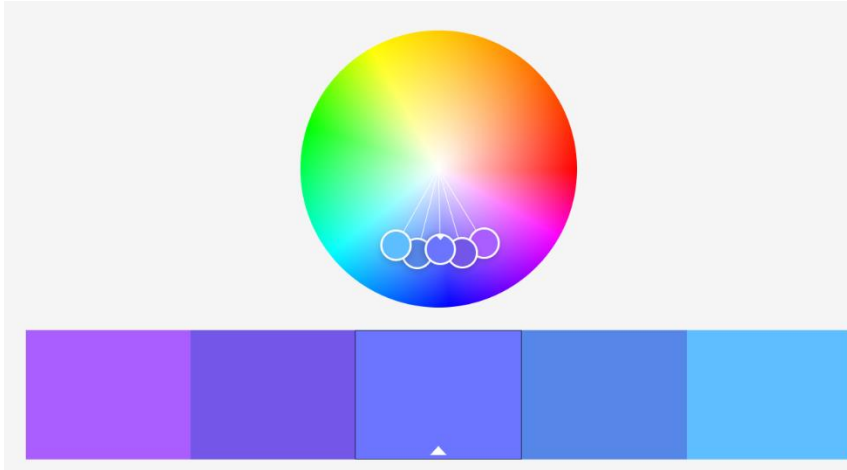


Figure 2. Screenshot of analogous colour scheme. (Adobe Color Wheel.)

The colour wheel can be used to create colour schemes. There are different colour schemes that a designer can play with, such as monochromatic, complementary, analogous and triadic. Monochromatic refers to a design that has one colour in various shades. Figure 2 above illustrates analogous harmony and means using colours that are located right next to each other. Complementary colour scheme is used when there's a need for high contrast. The colours used are on the opposite sites. When there's a need for more colours, a designer can make use of triadic colour scheme. In this, the used colours are equally spaced around the wheel. However, it is recommended to use one colour as dominant in order to keep balance. (Arhipova 2017.)

2.3.3 Typography

Typography also plays a big role in website design. As colours and imagery, there should be up to three different fonts on a website. Fonts work as a voice of a brand when it comes to visual interpretation. All fonts should be legible. (McConnel 2018.) Commonly, fonts can be divided into larger groups: typefaces. Most common typefaces are serif, sans serif, modern, display and script. (Wong 2019.) Figure 3 below shows an example of a type of font in each typeface.

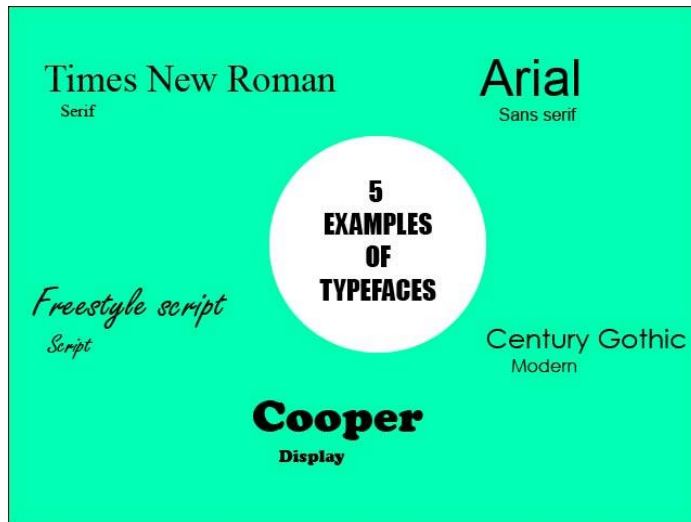


Figure 3. Examples of typefaces and fonts (adapted from WebsiteBuilderExpert s.a.)

There is font psychology when it comes to typography. Each style sends different feelings and associations. Sans serif fonts seem modern, engaging and clean. There are no elements that are decorative to distract the eye. Serif fonts are usually associated with tradition, trust and class. Script fonts are associated with elegance and creativity and may feel more personal. Modern fonts usually send feelings about style, exclusivity and intelligence. Display fonts are most unique and by fine-tuning them, they can send many different associations such as casual, fun, direct or unique. (Peate 2018.) Sans serif fonts tend to be the best and safest choice for websites because they are easy to read and clear. Serif fonts are also common to see on websites. Modern, script and display typefaces are less common but can be good choices in certain situations. Usually, they work best in small amounts. Fonts should always reflect the brand personality and target audience. (Wong 2019.)

2.3.4 User experience

It is crucial to think about the user experience and usability when designing a website. One way to have good user experience is to keep things simple. Using white space can make a website more appealing. "According to Crazy Egg, white space around text and titles increases user attention by 20%" (Jiminez 2018). White space is one way to make a website feel more modern, open and fresh. It also helps make the content on the website more legible. White space can also make the most important parts of text stand out. One has to keep in mind that using white space can take a lot of space and there should be a balance between it and the content on the page. (Jiminez 2018.)

Chapter 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 covered colours and typography and how there should not be too many different ones. The same goes for imagery. Imagery is an important factor of a website and there should not be too many graphics. It can take time and experience to gain that visual eye. Imagery includes photographs, illustrations, videos and other forms of graphics. All the graphics should be relevant to the company and capture the brand personality. Visuals are important for a website since they are the first things people notice and can create good or bad first impressions. It is important that any images used are high quality. (McConnel 2018.)

The navigation of the website should be simple for visitors. It should be easy for visitors to find what they are looking for. If the navigation of the website is confusing for the visitors, they might feel frustrated, give up and go to a competitor's website. (McConnel 2018.)

Using attractive and smart call to actions (CTAs) can have an impact on how customers perceive a website. CTAs should make visitors easily navigate through the content and find exactly what they are looking for. It is important to think what colour and style to use for a CTA and what words to use. As discussed before, different colours can send a different message to customers. The words used in CTA should always be verbs or action words that encourage customers to take the next step. They should have an emotional connection and the words should be action-oriented, bold and time-sensitive. For example, "Sign Up Now" and "Join Now" are good examples of action-oriented CTAs. (Jiminez 2018.)

When thinking about the design of a website and user experience, one should think of how people browse a site. There are certain patterns of how people usually look for information on a website. People have a natural eye movement when they browse a website that usually follows either Z-pattern or F-pattern. (Hughes 2019.)

F-pattern assumes that visitors will read the headline first and then move down to the left side of the page and go through the content that stands out. Next, the visitor's eyes will move horizontally looking for subheadings and bold text before going through the rest of the content. This pattern is most common on a page that is heavy on text, usually blog posts and articles. Z-pattern is useful for simple content such as home pages, advertisements and other contents that are very visual. It assumes that a visitor starts reading from the top left of the page, moves horizontally to the right, then crosses diagonally to the bottom left corner and again moves to the right horizontally. (Hughes 2019.)

People value time more than ever. For this reason, the load time of a webpage is important. A website can lose visitors if it takes too long to load. According to McConnel (2018), visitors on a website expect it to load in two seconds or less. Images can be one reason for a website to load too long which is why it's important to optimize images.

Viewing information on mobile is becoming more and more popular worldwide. Therefore, it's important for a website to be optimized for mobile usage. Figure 4 below shows the percentage of mobile traffic compared to all internet traffic. From the figure, we can see that globally over 50% of internet usage comes from mobile searches. In Europe, the mobile usage is less than globally (43,54%), but it is still a big amount of people that use mobile phones to search things online.

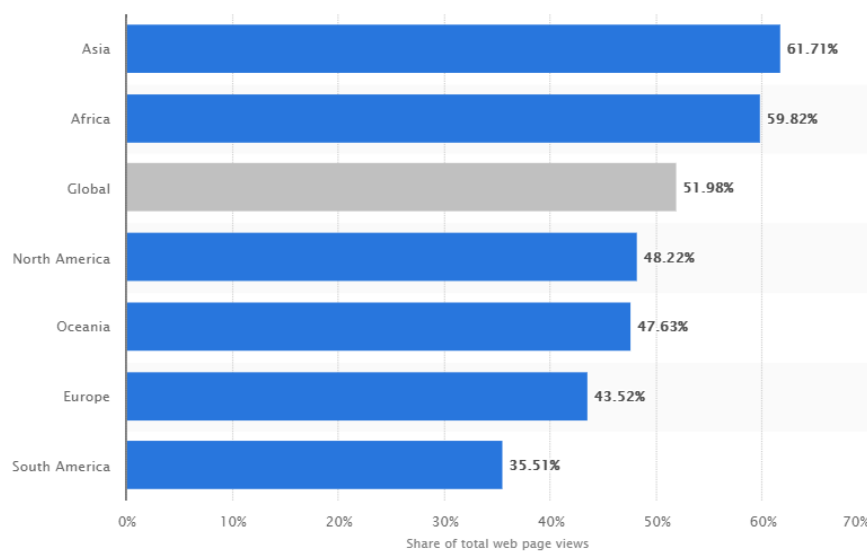


Figure 4. Mobile internet traffic by region of total internet traffic, January 2020 (Statista 2020.)

Chapter 2 so far has discussed about balance, colours, typography, imagery, navigation, load time, mobile-optimization and how people browse a website. One thing that connects all of these is consistency. It's important for a website to be consistent whether it comes to images being used or the colours of the website. A website is a way to communicate to the costumers and the message should be same across the pages.

Understanding your customers is a key factor of a successful business and improving user experience. Customer understanding is also important when it comes to designing a website and SEO. Businesses should know certain things about their customers to make sure that they offer what the customers need and want. According to Kyberg (2016), there are certain things businesses should be able to tell from their customers. These include

who their customers are and what they do, such as demographics, occupation and interests. Businesses should know why customers buy their products; for example, is it for personal reasons or business related. How and when customers buy is also important to know. What are customer's objections, pain points, feelings toward the business and the competitors can also be beneficial information for a business. (Kyberg 2016.)

2.4 Website optimization

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is used for driving qualified search engine traffic to a website by increasing the site's ranking in organic search engine listings. For a SEO strategy to be successful, the content on the website should be high quality. After creating the content, it should be optimized for search engines. This optimization can be done in three ways. Firstly, the keywords and search phrases should be identified and put in place. Secondly, smart link building strategy should be developed and executed and lastly, the page metadata should be optimized. (Frick & Eyler-Werve 2015, 49.)

Search engine optimization can also be divided into on-page and off-page SEO. On-page SEO refers to all the factors that the owner of a website can directly influence on. It means direct ways that can be done on the website to improve its ranking on search engines such as content, keywords, and metadata. Off-page optimization is a harder tactic of SEO because it is not as easily manipulated. Off-page SEO consists of actions that are done outside of the website that also have an impact on SEO rankings. They are meant to give clues to search engines about the social credibility and industry authority. Factors that influence an off-page SEO include link building, brand mentions and social signals. (Mastri 2018.)

This chapter focuses more on on-page SEO tactics since that will be the focus of this thesis. It discusses keywords, steps in keyword research and metadata.

2.4.1 Keywords

As stated above, the first step for SEO is to identify and use keywords and search phrases. Keywords are the words people enter to search engines when they look for specific information. These words in the search bar indicate what is the searcher's intent. Search engines have algorithms that search for content that utilizes the searched words. The goal of an SEO strategy is to figure what the words are that the website's target audience is using to search for information, therefore directing to find your website. (Frick & Eyler-Werve 2015, 49.)

There are usually two types of keywords: long tail and broad term. Broad term keywords are words that portray the offering in the most generic way. An example of a broad term keyword could be “investment apartments” or “apartment for sale”. Long tail keywords are more specific. For example, “studio apartments for sale in Helsinki” or “best construction company in Helsinki”. (Frick & Eyler-Werve 2015, 50.)

Keywords should be monitored and/or changed over time based on the performance of each keyword. According to Frick & Eyler-Werve (2015), keyword lists that consist of about 20 terms and phrases should be used. There should be a mixture of both long tail and broad terms. Broad terms tend to have more competition since they are more generic. As a result, it may be less likely to appear on the first few search results if broad terms are the only type of keywords used. Two- to Four-word phrases should also be included in keyword lists, as recommended by Frick & Eyler-Werve (2015), because based on people’s searches, phrases can be less competitive and more specific and targeted. Relevance checks on the keywords are also important. Sometimes terms that seem to fit well for a content can be less relevant for the business.

2.4.2 Keyword research

The process of analysing and finding search terms that people use when searching for specific things in search engines is called keyword research. Doing keyword research is important because it gives insight into what people care about and how popular the topics are. Keyword research can be used to get ideas on what to write content about, as well as what keywords to use on a website’s SEO settings. (Leist 2020.) Keyword research also impacts many other SEO tasks that are performed (Dean 2020). Figure 5 below shows six points where keyword research can be useful.

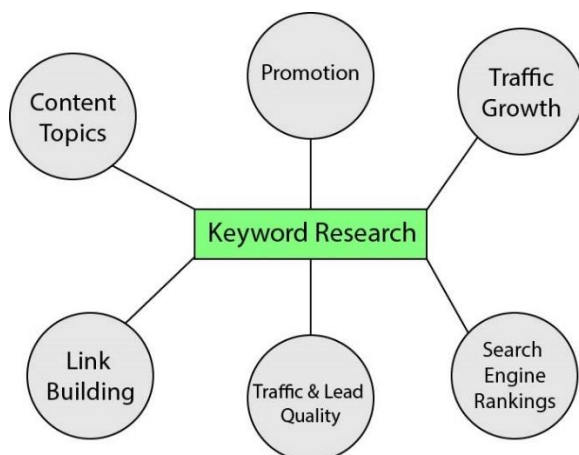


Figure 5. Impacts of keyword research (adapted from Backlinko s.a.)

There are steps that can be taken in keyword research. The first step is to list relevant and important topics about the business. This should include between five to ten different topics that are important. These generic topics will be useful when moving into the second step which is coming up with keywords relevant to the topics. In this step, one should brainstorm phrases of what your customers might search when they want information about the topic in the first step. (Leist 2020.)

The third step is to research other terms. There are many ways to do this and one is to check the related search terms on the bottom of the Google results page. This may give ideas of new keywords. (Leist 2020.) Other ways to get inspired is to see what Google, Bing or YouTube suggests when you type in one keyword. There are many tools online that can be used to find and research keywords. The most reliable tool is Google's Keyword Planner Tool (Dean 2020). Below figure 6 illustrates two ways to research keywords. You can discover new keywords and find out search volume and forecasts of specific keywords.

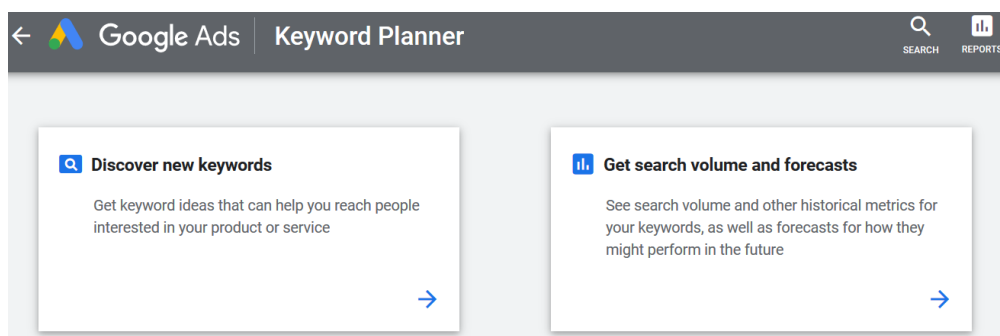


Figure 6. Screenshot of Google's Keyword Planner Tool (Keyword Planner.)

The fourth step is to ensure the list contains both long tail and broad term keywords. Step five is to find out what keywords competitors are using and how they are ranking the keywords. This does not mean that all the keywords competitors are using should be copied, but it can give ideas and another evaluation of your list. (Leist 2020.)

The last step is to cut down the keyword list. Google's Keyword Planner can be used for this step too. In this step, all the phrases in the keyword list should be researched. If some keywords have no search volume, they should be deleted. Also, keywords with high search volume may be too competitive. However, before deleting anything, Google Trends can be used to find out about trend history and predictions. (Leist 2020.)

2.4.3 Metadata

Search algorithms used by search engines can only understand text. If images or videos are used on your websites and you want them to be shown in search engine rankings, the files should be labelled with text tags that are machine readable: meta tags. (Frick & Eyler-Werve 2015, 54.)

Title tags are an important factor in a good SEO strategy. In every page, there is a title tag and they are shown in the head section of a webpage and search engine results. It gives clues and context of what the page is talking about. (Morris 2020.) A title tag should be descriptive but no longer than 80 characters. A good average amount is around 50 characters. (Ugor 2020.) Title tags should be relevant to the page and they should include words that are used in the text on that page to have an impact on SEO. They should also be unique since search engines don't like multiple pages to have the same tags. Keyword research is also an important factor when thinking of title tags, as they should be relevant to what people are searching for. (Morris 2020.)

Meta descriptions and optimizing them is another important factor of an SEO strategy. Meta descriptions can be seen as little ads that businesses can use to drive more website traffic. They appear in the search engines as short descriptions of pages. (Grybniak 2019.) Meta descriptions should normally be around 50 to 160 characters to give sufficient descriptions in order to be shown fully on search engines. (Moz 2017.) As title tags, meta descriptions should be customized to fit every page. They should include right keywords and they shouldn't be duplicated. Also, these descriptions should be readable, specific, customer-centric and possibly include CTAs. Customer-centric means that meta description should appeal to customers and answer to their questions. Instead of focusing on the business, the focus should be on customers. (Grybniak 2019.)

Heading tags are also part of metadata and SEO strategy. "Search engines look to heading tags to gauge the relevance of a page's content" (Frick & Eyler-Werve 2015, 56). Using headers helps provide structure to the webpage. It should also give an idea to the reader what the page is about. Heading tags are illustrated as H1, H2, H3, H4, H5 and H6. H1 displays the topic of the page and there should only be one of these. (Willson 2018.) H1 tags should be around 20 to 70 characters (Patel 2020). H2 is like chapters in a book. It describes the main points covered on the page. H3 to H6 are subsequent headers, meaning that they are additional sub-headings. Headers can be used to break up text, making it more readable. Heading tags should also include keywords. (Willson 2018.)

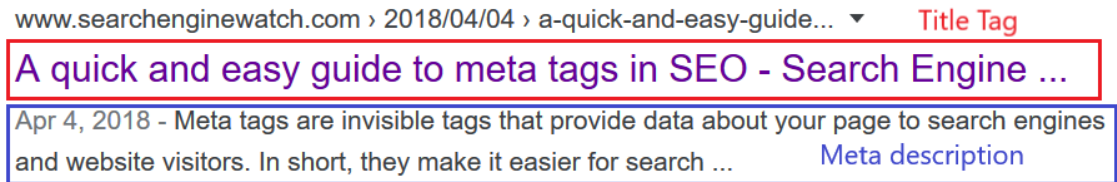


Figure 7. Screenshot of title tag and meta description in Google (Google.)

Figure 7 above illustrates how title tags and meta descriptions are shown in search engines, Google in this case. Title tags can be the same as an H1 tag. Figure 8 below shows the SEO settings on Weebly. These can be edited for each page. Page title stands for the title tag and page description means meta description. Meta keywords are keywords that can be listed for each page separately.

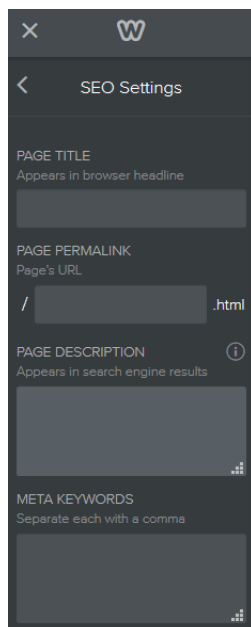


Figure 8. Metadata settings in Weebly (Weebly.)

3 Plan for the website design and SEO improvements

The objective for this thesis is to create functioning and visually attractive pages on Efika's website to promote new apartments. The second objective is to improve the website's overall SEO score to help with the promotion. This chapter covers the plan to achieve these objectives. Mock-ups were created and feedback was gathered through interviews. I also interviewed Efika's CEO to get some understanding of their target customers. The information gathered in Chapter 2 was used to help with the planning and implementation.

The mock-ups were designed using Adobe Illustrator. Adobe Color Wheel was used to generate the colour scheme. A few different mock-ups were made to find out which versions the interviewees preferred the most. The interviews were done using Skype. I shared the screen showing the mock-ups and asked questions to obtain insight. Semi-structured interview method was used for the interviews. The idea was to get answers to a set of questions about the user experience and design as well as obtain feedback from the interviewees.

During this process, I did not have the content available, so all the designs were made using stock images. This still gave me and the interviewees an idea of what the pages would look like. The focus was more on the structure, design and user experience and not the content.

3.1 Methodology

This is a product-based thesis with an objective to create a new page for Efika's website and optimizing the website. To do this successfully, theory from that topic was studied. This thesis uses different tools to work with SEO improvements. To analyse the website for SEO improvements, I will use Neil Pate's SEO analyser. When researching keywords and making keyword lists, I will use Google's Keyword Planner Tool.

This thesis only uses qualitative research methods. To gain a better understanding of Efika's customers, a structured interview will be conducted with an employee of the company. Structured interview means that I have a list of questions and will follow them precisely. To get feedback of the new page, interviews by Skype will be conducted in two parts. The first set of interviews will be done at the planning stage so that the feedback can be gathered early enough and possible changes can still be made. The second set of interviews will be done after the page is complete to obtain feedback. This feedback will be useful for further recommendations. All the interviews about the feedback of the website design will be semi-structured. Semi-structured interview means that an interviewer

has a list of prepared questions but does not necessarily follow them strictly. During semi-structured interview, I will include more open-ended questions, but not necessarily ask all the prepared questions, depending on the interviewees' response. There needs to be planned questions for interviewees to gain information on the topics that are relevant. However, an interviewee can give valuable opinions that the interviewer has not thought about beforehand.

3.2 Target group

A few questions were asked from Efika's CEO to get a better understanding of their customers. This was done to get a better image of who the website is targeted towards. It was also beneficial when choosing people to interview for feedback of the mock-ups and final results. To get the most valuable feedback, it made sense to interview those who fit the target group. The CEO was chosen because this person is mostly in contact with the current customers and knows the business well.

The questions asked were based on the information businesses should know about their customers that were presented in Chapter 2.3.4. The main takeaways were that Efika's customers can be anyone over the age of 18 with the resources to buy an apartment, but the main target group includes people 30- to 70-years old with higher than an average income. They are people who want to live in an apartment building in the centre of Lappeenranta. The apartment could also be an investment for someone to rent out.

3.3 Website structure

Since the new pages will be quite text and information heavy, f-browsing pattern was kept in mind when planning the design. This is because it was found that people follow certain patterns when browsing a website. When there is a lot of information, people tend to use f-browsing pattern.

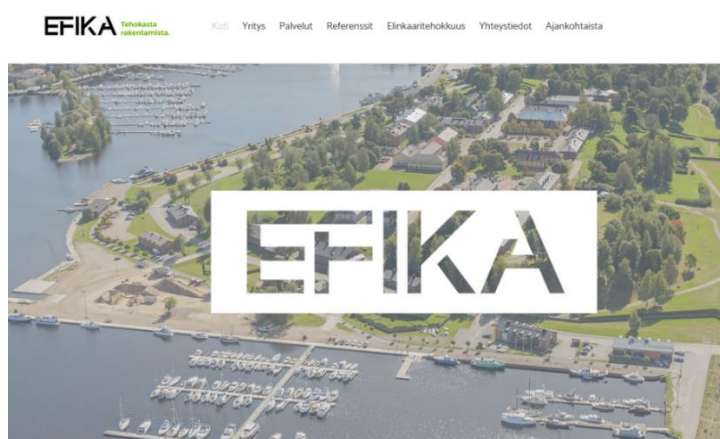


Figure 9. Screenshot of Efika's front page.

Figure 9 illustrates the commissioner's current home page of their website. The banner image will be changed to a slideshow. There will be at least three different images. Figure 12 showcases two different options created. The first image will stay as it is, but the logo will be switched to text that lets visitors know that Efika will be selling new apartments. It will include a button that links to the main page of the apartments for sale page. The following images will be the best images of the new apartments with text that brings out the best qualities. A page for the apartment listings will be added to the navigation as apartments. It will be placed as first in the navigation. The home page tab will be removed from the navigation since it is not necessary as people use the logo as a link back to the home page.

The new page will have a banner image or a video to showcase what the new apartments and the building will look like. Figures 13, 14 and 15 illustrate the three different options created for the new page. Below the banner image, there will be a heading stating what the page is about. There will also be general information about the new building. Below this information, there will be the individual apartment listings, shown as a preview. There are 4 different apartment types in total. I created two options on how to show the listings. The first option (figure 13) is to have one listing per row so that the preview is longer horizontally. The second option (figure 14) is to have three listings per row as boxes. To help decide which option to choose, feedback will be collected from those interviewed with their input on the different options. In the preview listings, there will be an image showing what the apartments look like, the most important information of the apartments, and a button linked to another page that has more detailed information about each apartment.

The pages that include more detailed information about each apartment follow the same style as the general apartment page to create consistency. The first part will be a banner image of the apartment, following the name or the address of the apartments. Below, more information of the apartment will be presented as well as more images. I will also add a map of the location and contact details.

The CTAs (buttons) on the website will be made clear and attractive, they will include verbs and be action oriented. On the home page the CTAs will say "Tutustu kohteisiin" (Get to know our listings). On the apartments page, they will say "Lue lisää" (Read more). On the individual pages the CTAs will say "Ota yhteyttä" (Contact). There may be other CTA's used as well.

3.4 Webpage design

Chapter 2 covered balance, consistency, and good user experience in website design. I will focus on achieving these by choosing the right fonts, colours and structure. There needs to be balance and consistency on the website design without disturbing the user experience.

All pages on the website need to follow a similar design. I will change the fonts and colours to give the website a better look. I will also structure the content in a visually pleasing way that enhances the user experience.

As we learnt in Chapter 2, fonts are an important factor when it comes to web design and there are psychological factors in typography. They help to drive the message across to customers and are important when considering first impressions. Efika promotes itself as being efficient, result-driven and competent. They value their customer's needs and wants. The chosen fonts should help to deliver this message to the visitors. The fonts should be clear and strong. The best typeface that fits this description is sans serif. Roboto and Open Sans are fonts that go well together which is why I chose them. They are both very legible and clear, as well as visually attractive. Only two fonts are chosen to avoid confusion and keep consistency. Figure 10 illustrates what these fonts look like.

The used fonts are:

Navigation – Open Sans

Headlines – Roboto

Sub-headlines - Roboto

Body text – Open Sans

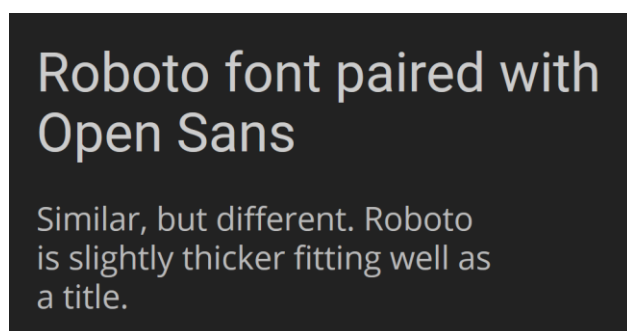


Figure 10. Roboto and Open Sans fonts paired. (FontJoy 2020.)

Colours evoke different emotions. Efika's brand colour is green so that will be the main colour used on the website. The monochromatic colour scheme will be chosen to pick different shades of green. There is no need for big contrast on the website and using different shades of the main green reinforces the brand. The Adobe Color Wheel is used to find a good colour scheme. Figure 11 below illustrates the chosen colour scheme.

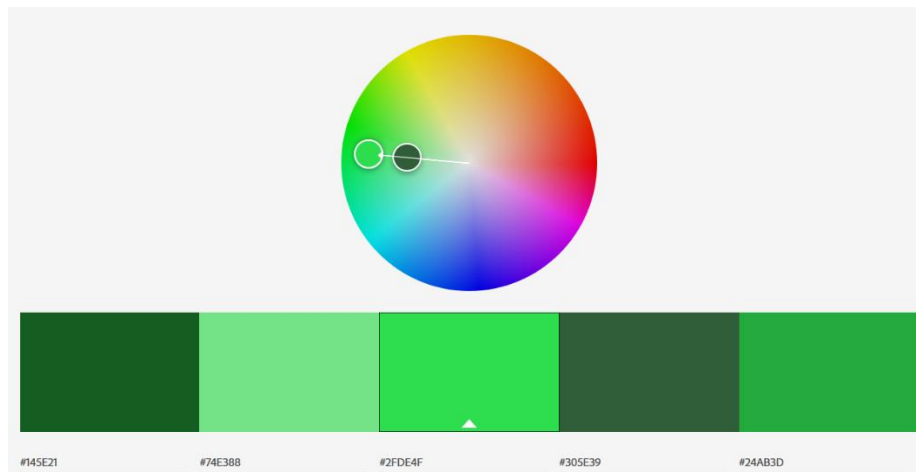


Figure 11. Screenshot of Adobe Color Wheel (Adobe Color.)

The colour #2FDE4F is chosen as the main colour. It is a fairly bold colour so it will only be used in small amounts. It will be used in buttons and in small amounts in text to emphasize the important information. The colour next to it, #74E388, may be used as a background colour in certain parts of a website as figure 15 presents. It is chosen because it is lighter, which does not make it too overwhelming. The use of a second colour will be tested in feedback interviews. If people find it too overwhelming, a white background will be substituted instead. The fonts will mostly be black. On images on the front page, they may be white or green to give contrast. The background will mostly stay white.

White space will be used to make information more easily processed. Since there will be quite a lot of information, this is important to remember. The website cannot seem too cluttered. To keep the loading time to a minimum, the images will be optimized for the website. The website will also have to be mobile-friendly. Weebly automatically optimizes websites for all devices, but sometimes it does not work as planned so this needs to be checked as the edits are made.

3.5 Mock-ups

Mock-ups of the new parts of the website were made by Adobe Illustrator. There were no Roboto or Open Sans fonts on the Adobe program, however similar fonts were chosen instead. At this stage, I did not have the real content, images and text for the website so stock photos were used in its place.

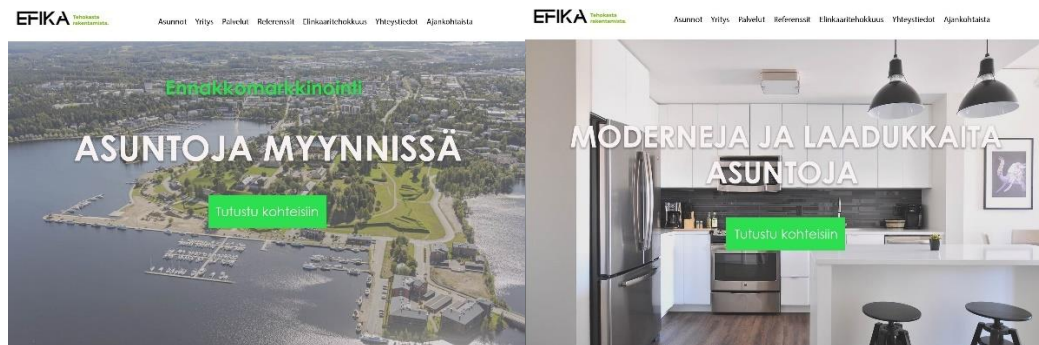


Figure 12. Mock-ups of the home page.



Figure 13. First option for the new page.



Figure 14. Second option for the new page.



Figure 15. Third option for the new page.

3.6 Feedback

From the interview with Efika’s CEO, I found that the target customers are people over 30 years old with an interest in buying an apartment for themselves or as an investment. This includes people that are interested in living in an apartment building centrally located in the centre of Lappeenranta. Four people that fit in at least one of these criteria were chosen for feedback interviews of the mock-ups. Feedback interviews were gathered using semi-structured interview method. The interviews were conducted through Skype by showing the mock-ups to get an understanding of the user experience.

Through the interviews, I wanted to know how people felt about the updated website as part of their customer journey if they were buying an apartment. The following questions were asked from the interviewees. However, there were more follow up questions asked based on the answers.

1. What do you think this website offers?
2. Is the message clear?
3. What would you do next if you wanted more information?
4. What do you think about the design? Colours, pictures, text, overall feeling?
5. Which design is the most attractive to you?
6. What do you think about the colours used?

I wanted to know if the home page was clear enough for people to understand what it is about without explaining it. All the interviewees were able to describe what the business was offering. It was clear for them what they would have to do to get more information. All said that they would click on the green button to find out more. When it came to the home page design, interviewees felt good about the colours used. Three people mentioned that it might be better if the first picture could be an image of the apartment building itself or an image of the neighbourhood.

I also wanted to know which design would be the best for the apartments page. Three out of four thought that the first option (figure 13) was the best. One explanation was that it is easier to comprehend because you are reading it from left to right. The first option seemed also to give a better chance to include more information and did not seem too cluttered. It was also mentioned that the preview images could be bigger. Even though most people thought the first option was the best, all seemed to agree that the green background in the third option (figure 15) would be a good addition. The page seemed “too basic” with just the white background and mostly black text. It was also mentioned that the page seemed to have too much text on it, and they were “not looking forward to reading it”.

3.7 SEO

Improvements will be made for the SEO according to the findings from SEO analysis with the help from theoretical framework. From the analysis, I found out that the website has mostly issues with the metadata. It is missing heading tags, title tags and meta descriptions. Also, keywords will be added to the new page.

Neil Patel's SEO analyser tool audits a website and gives a general SEO score. It checks the health of webpages, gives tips for improvements, information about website traffic and keywords. These are just examples of the tool's features. There are many other tools to

analyse a website's SEO, but I chose this because of previous experience with this tool and it is free.

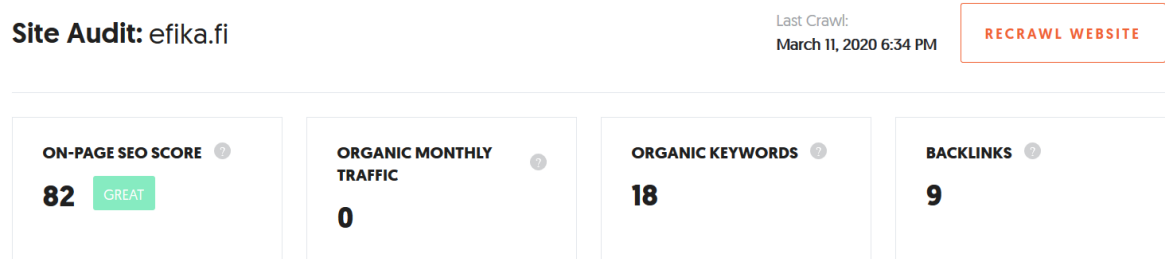


Figure 16. Screenshot of site audit of Efika's website (Neil Patel 2020.)

Figure 16 shows the on-page SEO score, organic monthly traffic, organic keywords and backlinks. Efika's on-page SEO score is 82 which is great according to the tool. The scale is from 0 to 100 and it includes an analysis of all the webpages. The organic monthly traffic is 0, there are 18 organic keywords and 9 backlinks that link to the website from other sites.

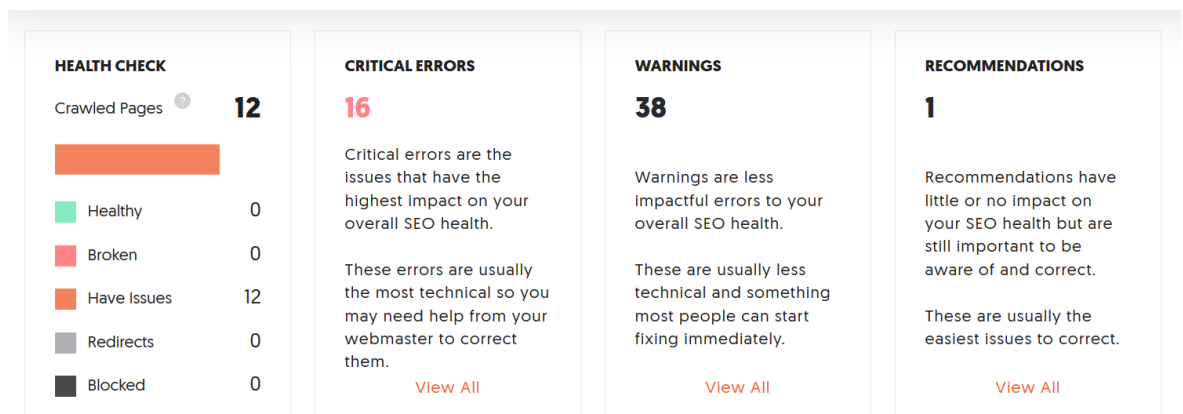


Figure 17. Screenshot of health check, errors, warnings and recommendations (Neil Patel 2020.)

Figure 17 above illustrates the health check of all the pages, critical errors, warnings and recommendations. This shows that Efika's website has many issues on all the pages. Efika has 12 pages and the tool shows that all of them have some issues. There are 16 critical errors which have a high impact on SEO's overall health. There are 38 warnings, but the tool says that these do not have a very big impact on the SEO health. There is also one recommendation.

When looking deeper into of the issues of the 12 pages, most of the issues come from low word count, pages without H1 headings and meta descriptions and title tags that are too

short. Other notable issues include a few pages have that have a long load time, poorly formatted URL, and sitemap.xml is not optimized.

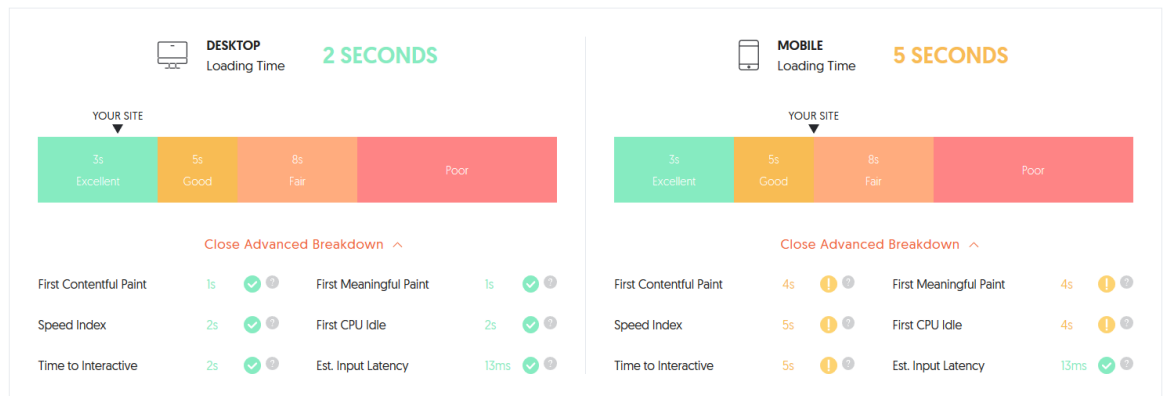


Figure 18. Screenshot of site speed (Neil Patel 2020.)

Figure 18 above displays the analysis of site speed. The loading time for desktop is 2 seconds which is excellent. However, the mobile loading time is 5 seconds which is between good and fair according to Neil Patel's SEO tool.

I will work on fixing most of the issues that Neil Patel's SEO analyser stated. The heading tags, title tags and meta descriptions to all pages will be added. I will also try to work on lowering the mobile load time. Low word count will not be worked on because I cannot come up with new content for the website. However, this will be recommended to the commissioner to work on this.

Keywords

The first step of building the metadata is keyword research. Doing this first can help formulating new ideas for the metadata since they should include some keywords. Keyword lists for each page will not be created separately because of time constraints. There will only be a keyword list for the home page and the new page. However, parts of the lists can be used on the other pages.

I will follow the steps learned in Chapter 2.4. These steps were:

1. Come up with keyword topics about the business
2. Brainstorm keywords that people would search for on search engines
3. Research other keywords (Google's Keyword Planner Tool)
4. Make sure there is both long tail and broad term keywords
5. Research how competitors rank the keywords
6. Cut down the list (Google's Keyword Planner Tool)

Metadata

Meta descriptions, heading tags and title tags should all be specific and relevant to each page. What these have in common is the use of keywords. The contents of pages include keywords that will be used to come up with the missing metadata.

Heading and title tags can often be the same or almost the same. I will read each page and based on the text, appropriate tags will be added to the pages. Title tags will be around 70 characters. For heading tags, mostly H1 tags will be used because they are the most important and most of the pages do not have much text. Therefore, there is no need for other heading tags. H1 tags will have 20-70 characters. On few pages that have more content, H2 tags may also be added.

Meta descriptions will be added to each page separately to summarize the most important content the page has. The meta descriptions will also include keywords. They will also be about 50 to 160 characters.

3.8 Summary

Mock-ups were developed based on the plan created. Feedback was gathered through Skype interviews with four interviewees. Based on the feedback, changes will be made when implementing the updates for the website. On the home page, the first image will be changed to an image that shows the new apartment building. When it comes to the page with all the listings, the first option of the mock-ups will be used as a basis. The green background will be added behind the listings. It was mentioned that the page seemed to have too much text on the page so this will be kept in mind when designing the page. There could be more photos used or other design elements depending on the content received.

The SEO analysis of Efika's website showed few issues with the website. Based on these issues, a plan was created to fix some of them. I planned to focus on keywords and metadata, more specifically, heading tags, title tags and meta descriptions. Keyword lists will be created for two pages, the home page and the new page.

4 Creating the web pages and SEO improvements

Chapter 3, the planning phase, started with understanding the target audience, followed by planning the structure and design of the web pages. After this, the mock-ups were created and four people who fit the target group were interviewed to get feedback for improvements. Based on the feedback received, changes and improvements to the plan were made. Chapter 3 also included the plan to implement SEO improvements including keywords, title tags, heading tags and meta descriptions.

Due to the commissioner not providing content for the website in time, the implementation started later than planned. Although it was discussed with the commissioner what would be included for the website, it could not be planned well since I did not have a clear image of all the information to be included. The commissioner was not able to get photos and videos required for the website because their hired architect did not provide them on time. Therefore, I was not able to finish the webpage creation. The commissioner provided all the necessary content for the pages to be created, excluding the photos. This means that by the end of this thesis, the new pages will not be published yet. Also, the changes to the home page could not be made yet. This is because there might be some updates on the home page that need to be made prior to launching the new pages. All the images used in this chapter are stock images. The commissioner and I agreed that I will keep working on the website and change the images as soon as they receive them.

4.1 Structure and design of the new web pages

After receiving the content for the website, the implementation could start. Based on the feedback of the mock-ups, changes were made to the plan. Important feedback was that the page seemed boring. I wanted to add more design elements to balance the amount of text the page would have. I increased the number of pictures on the page and put the most important information about the apartments first in a way that it is easy and quick to comprehend without having to read too much.

The main colour chosen is used throughout the webpage. The green colour is in titles and buttons to highlight the important parts and to help visitors understand what each part is about. The fonts are also changed to the chosen fonts. White space was also used to make the text easier to comprehend. Figure 19 below shows what a visitor will see when they first arrive to the page.

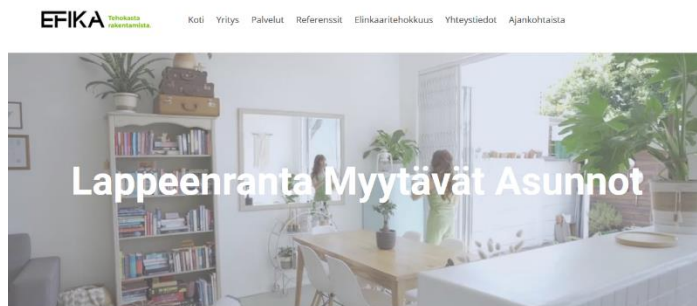


Figure 19. Screenshot of first glance of the new page.

Figure 20 below shows the first part of the page after the banner photo. There is a summary of what the page is about. It includes the address, how many available apartments remain, what are the sizes of the apartments and the reservation price. Next to this picture is a visualisation image of an apartment. This can also be a slideshow if Efika has enough visualisation images. I also added buttons that anchor to other parts of the page so that it is easy for visitors to find the information they are looking for. These buttons are apartments, images, and contact.

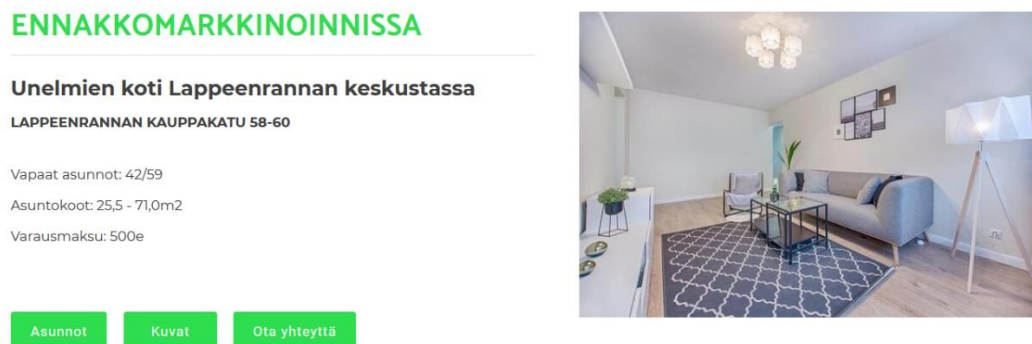


Figure 20. Screenshot of apartments page first part.

Next, I added a visualisation image with text that highlights the key benefits of living in this apartment building. Figure 20 below illustrates this. I wanted to add this because it draws attention and a visitor is more likely to read this part. I want the image to be either an image of the apartment building or the city of Lappeenranta.



Figure 21. Screenshot of second part of the page.

After the image from figure 21, I added the part that includes the most amount of text. Figure 22 below showcases this part of the webpage. Even though it may seem like a lot of text, it is all necessary information that adds benefit to the interested visitor. After discussing with the commissioner, they said that they want this page to include contact information for the contact person and a form where a visitor can leave a call request. I added these to the right side of the page. Contact information was also added to the end of the page to make sure it is easy for the visitor to find. Bold text was used in small amounts to highlight some of the important parts.

LAPPEENRANNAN KAUPPAKATU 58-60

Keskustassa sijaitsevalla tontilla asut kaikkien palvelujen ja erinomaisten liikenneyhteyksien äärellä.

Lappeenrannan Kauppakatu 58-60 rakennetaan omalle tontille Lappeenrannan keskustaan, osoitteeseen Kauppakatu 58-60. Kohde sijaitsee Kauppakadun varrella vain noin 400m kävelymatkan päässä kauppakeskus Iso-Kristiinasta. Asuntojen suunnittelussa on huomioitu asumisen mukavuus, tyylikkyys, valoisuus ja väljyys. Yksityiskohdissa tämä näkyy esimerkiksi lähelle lattiapintaa ulottuvissa olohuoneen ikkunoissa. Kaikissa asunnoissa, pienimpiä yksioita lukuun ottamatta on oma lasitettu parveke. Näyttävän rakennuksen on suunnitellut Arkkitehtitoimisto Käppi Oy, Heikki Käppi (arkkitehti SAFA).

Ympäristöstävällistä, miellyttävää ja edullista asumista

Rakennuksen lämmönlähteenä on maalämpö yhdistettynä mukavaan lattialämmitykseen, joka takaa ympäristöstävällisen, kustannustehokkaan lämmityksen. Huoneistoihin on lisäksi mahdollista toteuttaa erillinen, maalämpöjärjestelmään yhdistetty viilennys, joka lisää asumismukavuutta helteellä. Teknisessä toteutuksessa huomioidaan rakennuksen koko elinkaaren ekotehokkuus turvallisesti ja laadukkaasti.

Asuessasi voit nauttia uuden kotisi nykyaikaisista ominaisuuksista ja mukavuuksista ekologisesti.

Lappeenrannan Kauppakatu 58-60:

• Etelästä viihtyisä asumista miellyttävään ja edulliseen kauppakeskukseen

OTA YHTEYTTÄ

ESSI ESIMERKKI

044 123 4567

essi.esimerkki@efika.fi

JÄTÄ MEILLE SOITTOPYYNTÖ

Soitamme sinulle takaisin.

Puhelinnumero

Lähetä

Figure 22. Screenshot of information about the apartments with contact details.

Figure 23 below illustrates nearby services and their distances from the apartment building. The most important distances are clearly illustrated with icons in a way that it is easy and quick to understand.

PALVELUT JA ETÄISYYDET

			
Päivittäistavara kauppa	Kauppakeskus	Bussipysäkki	Rautatieasema
120m	Iso-Kristiina 400m	0m	700m


Figure 23. Screenshot of services and distances.

The next part, figure 24 below introduces all the different available apartments. This was done based on the plan. I originally planned to add a green background, but in my opinion, it did not look visually appealing upon implementing it and consulting the commissioner. However, since there are more additional elements than planned, I think it is not necessary to have the green background. The green titles and buttons add enough colour and it also gives consistency with other parts of the page.

Each apartment preview includes the name of the apartment and the most important information including the floor, size, square meters and price information. I wanted to make this information clear and easy to understand. I also added an image and short text about each apartment. All link to different pages that include more detailed information about each apartment individually.

LAPPEENRANTA MYYTÄVÄT ASUNNOT

LAPPEENRANNAN KAUPPAKATU
58-60 A5




Kerros	Koko	Neliöt	Velaton hinta	Myyntihinta
2	2h+kt	50,5	139.000€	41.700€

Moderni ja tilava kaksio upealla sijainnilla. Löydät tästä asunnosta kaiken tarpeellisen ja se sijaitsee Lappeenrannan keskustassa. Katso tarkemmat tiedot kohteesta.

[Lue lisää](#)

LAPPEENRANNAN KAUPPAKATU
58-60 A7



Kerros	Koko	Neliöt	Velaton hinta	Myyntihinta
2	1h+kt	25,5	102.000€	30.600€

Moderni yksio upealta paikalta. Neliöt ovat käytetty viisaasti tehden kodista täydellisen yksin tai kaksin asumiseen. Katso tarkemmat tiedot kohteesta.

[Lue lisää](#)

Figure 24. Screenshot of apartment listings.

An important note is that there will be four different apartment types that will be shown on the website. There are 59 apartments altogether. The commissioner wants to show the four different options only, as they only differ in apartment size. The price varies depending on the floor and there will be a .pdf file added to the pages that has all the different apartments listed.

Below figure 23, there is a map of the location and contact information. I also created pages for the individual apartments that can be accessed through the button links. These pages follow the same style for consistency throughout the site. A page can be copied to ensure the pages are the same as well as save time in creation.

Figure 25 below shows the first information the visitor sees when arriving to the page (before banner image of an apartment). Like in figure 20, this part summarizes the most important information, followed by an image of the floor plan. This may also be a slideshow depending on the images the commissioner will get.

A5 | 50,5m² | 2h+kt

**LAPPEENRANNAN KAUPPAKATU
58-60 A5**

ENNAKKOMARKKINOINNISSA

Kerros: 2/8

Koko: 2h+kt

Neliöt: 50,5

Velaton hinta: 139.000€

Myyntihinta: 41.700€

Ota yhteyttä



Figure 25. Screenshot of the preview information.

Below figure 26, I want to add more images of the apartment as a slideshow. At this stage, I do not have these images, but I will create this later for the commissioner. Below these images, I created a part which has more detailed information about the apartment and the prices. Figure 25 below illustrates this part. There will also be a map of the location and contact information below the next part.

ASUNTOTIEDOT

Asumnon numero:	A5
Kerros:	2
Koko:	2h+k
Neliöt:	50,5
Parveke:	Kyllä
Sauna:	Ei
Vapaa/Varattu:	Vapaa

HINTATIEDOT

Velaton hinta:	139 000€
Lainaosuus:	97 300€
Myyntihinta:	41 700€
Alustava hoitovastike €/kk:	151,50€
Alustava rahoitusvastike €/kk (korko, ensimmäinen vuosi):	89,19€
Alustava vastike yht. €/kk:	240,69€
Alustava rahoitusvastike €/kk (lyhennys+korko):	622,25€
Kaikki vastikkeet yht. €/kk:	773,75€
€/m2:	2752,48€

Figure 26. Screenshot of the apartment information.

4.2 Mobile optimization

Weebly optimizes the site automatically to mobile devices, but after checking this I noticed that it does not always work properly. I used an app in Weebly that hides elements from large or small screens. This way some elements that do not work well on mobile devices can be redone and hide from desktops and vice versa. It was more work, but it necessary since mobile optimization is crucial these days.

Figure 27 below illustrates the differences before and after mobile optimization. The difference is very noticeable. If the website were left as it is in the left mobile screen, there is a big chance a visitor could leave the site as it does not make sense. All the necessary adjustments were made as needed.

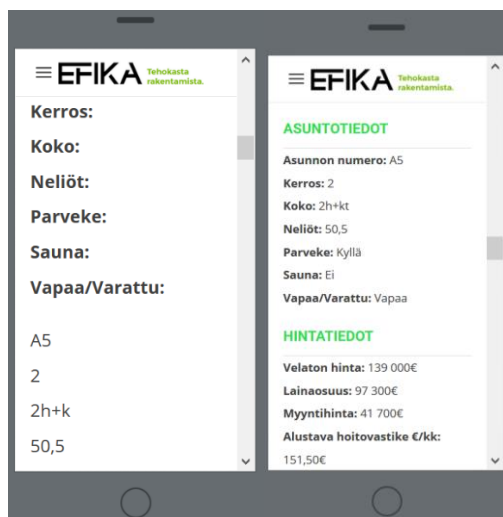


Figure 27. The difference between before (left) and after (right) mobile optimization.

4.3 SEO

According to the plan created in Chapter 3, the improvement of SEO started with keyword research. Other improvements included adding title tags, heading tags and meta descriptions.

There were six steps in keyword research. I focused only on doing keyword research for the home page and the new page that sells apartments. There were not many topics that I could think of which is why I only focused on one topic on the home page, which was a construction company. For the new page I focused on two topics: apartments for sale and investment apartments.

Table 1. Brainstorming keywords.

Home page	New page
Efika	Efika myytävät asunnot
Efika Oy	Lappeenranta myytävät asunnot
Rakennusliike	Myytävät asunnot
Rakennusliike Lappeenranta	Myytävät asunnot Lappeenranta
Rakennuspalvelut	Asunnot Lappeenranta
Kiinteistökehitys	Myytävät yksiöt Lappeenranta
Asuinrakentaminen	Myytävät kaksiot Lappeenranta
Toimitilarakentaminen	Myytävät kolmiot Lappeenranta
Elinkaaritehokkuus	Asunnon osto Lappeenranta
Toimitilarakentaminen Lappeenranta	Lappeenranta asunnot myynnissä
Kiinteistökehittäminen Lappeenranta	Myytävät asunnot Etelä-Karjala

The second step was to brainstorm keywords. I made a list for both pages and wrote all the keywords I could think of relating to the contents. Table 1 above shows the list of keywords I came up with during this phase. I came up with 11 keywords for both pages with both long tail and broad term keywords. Having both types of keywords was important. In the next step I researched other keywords using Google's Keyword Planner. I added all the keywords I came up with and it showed suggestions for other keywords that were related to the topics. I picked the most relevant and best performing keywords based on the number of searched keywords and the competition they had. I was able to add six more keywords to the home page list and eight for the apartments page.

I made sure again that I had both broad term and long tail keywords. I skipped the next step of researching how competitors ranked their keywords, because it did not seem

needed for now. I moved on to cutting down the list. I put all the keywords in the Keyword Planner Tool and checked how much people were searching these terms and how big the competition was. I cut down all the keywords that were not being searched at all. Competition for all chosen keywords were either small or medium. This way there is more chance to show up in search results when there is not too much competition. As learned, there does not need to be many keywords on one page. Table 2 below illustrates the final lists of keywords that will be added to the pages. During this process, I noticed that few of the keywords I came up with in the brainstorming phase fit better on other pages, so I also added keywords to those pages.

Table 2. Final keyword list.

Homepage	New page
Efika	Lappeenranta myytävät asunnot
Efika Oy	Myytävät asunnot
Rakennusliike	Myytävät asunnot Lappeenranta
Rakennusliike Lappeenranta	Uudet myytävät asunnot Lappeenranta
Rakennuspalvelut	Myytävät kerrostaloasunnot Lappeenranta
Rakennusfirmat	Myytävät sijoitusasunnot
	Uudet myytävät asunnot Lappeenranta

After doing the keyword research, I started building the other parts of metadata for each page. I did this page by page. First, I read all the contents so I could come up with appropriate tags and descriptions. All the pages already had headings, but they were not formatted as heading tags. For most pages, I did not change the title at all, I just made the title as H1 for search engines.

For each page, I also created title tags. For most pages, the title tags were similar to H1 tags. Title tags should be around 70 characters so they can be longer than H1 tags. As H1 tags, title tags were created to be descriptive of the pages including keywords found in the content. Meta descriptions were also created for each page. These descriptions were short summaries of what each page was about. I tried to make them customer centric as I learned that this is the best way to create meta descriptions. All meta descriptions were made to be a maximum of 160 characters, that way they will show fully in search engines. Below, figure 28 shows an example of a meta description of one of the pages. Meta description is titled as page description on Weebly's SEO settings.

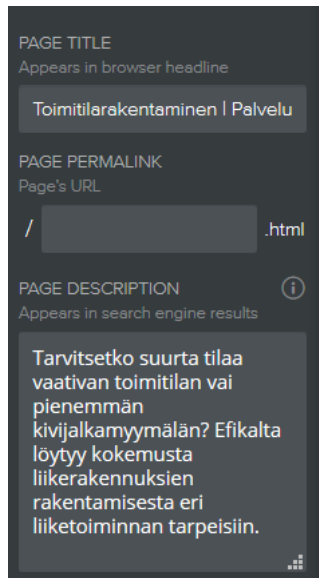


Figure 28. Example of a title tag and meta description.

4.4 Analysis of SEO improvements

Neil Patel's SEO analyser tool was used to analyse the SEO improvements. Figure 29 below shows the site audit of the commissioner's website. Before the updates were implemented, the on-page SEO score was 82. After the updates were implemented, the SEO score increased to 86, showing that the improvements were successful.

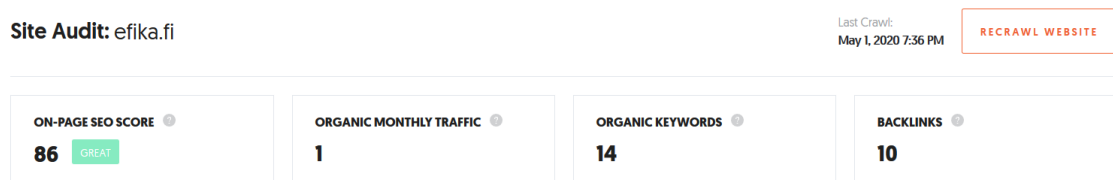


Figure 29. Screenshot of site audit of Efika's website after updates (Neil Patel.)

There were also other signs that show the success of the SEO improvements. Before, there were 16 critical errors, 38 warnings and 1 recommendation. Figure 30 below shows that the critical errors decreased to 10 and warnings to 12. This was due to adding title tags, heading tags and meta descriptions for all pages.

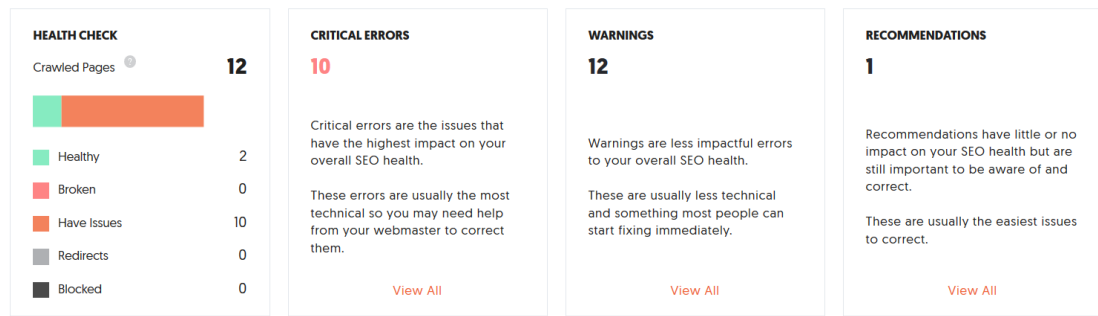


Figure 30. Screenshot of health check, errors, warnings and recommendations after updates (Neil Patel.)

There are still a few issues with the pages regarding errors and warnings. However, most come from pages having a low word count. It was already stated that I cannot add more content to these pages, but I will recommend to the commissioner that this be resolved.

Discussion

The main objective of this thesis was to create a new, fully functioning page for the construction company Efika's website. They will start building a new apartment building in Lappeenranta and they need to premarket the apartments beforehand. The commissioner needed one page with general information about the apartment building with four different listings and four other pages to show more detailed information of each listing. I created five new pages in total. The second objective was to improve the website's SEO score.

The project started with outlining the objectives, tasks and delimitation. I do not have experience with HTML coding, but that was not needed since I used Weebly for this thesis, a web hosting service with a drag and drop interface. I have created a Weebly website before, so I knew how it works and it does not require coding skills. I also worked with SEO improvements. I had the basic knowledge of SEO and I wanted to learn more about it so it seemed like a good addition to the project as it could bring added value to the commissioner. SEO is a large topic to cover, but I knew that Efika's website was missing metadata, so I chose that as the focus.

I studied various sources to gain knowledge about SEO and how to create a visually attractive website with a good user experience. Sources mostly included online articles and blog posts, as well as books as references. The main takeaways when it came to website design cohesiveness between pages, having a balance between text and visual elements and consistency with fonts, imagery and colours used. Mobile optimization was another important factor. All these were kept in mind when creating the plan for the webpage.

There were a few challenges with this project. The main challenge was that I was not able to get the content for the website according to the schedule. The commissioner was not also able to provide the images needed for the website. After discussing with the commissioner about the contents to include in the pages, I was able to create a plan for the structure and design of the new pages and the mock-ups. After creating the mock-ups, I interviewed four people to get feedback. This ended up being valuable information and I was able to change the plan before implementing.

The objective was to have the new pages ready by the end of this thesis project, but due to not receiving the photos, this objective was not fulfilled. However, when it was time to start implementing, the commissioner gave all the other contents and I was able to create the pages without the photos. We agreed that I will finish designing the website once the necessary contents are received. I took the feedback received in the planning phase and

made some big changes to the final design. I wanted the website to have more visual elements to balance the amount of text the pages included. I also optimized the pages for mobile users. All the pages are easy to edit in the future and I went through how it worked with the contact person. The feedback from the commissioner regarding the new pages was good. The contact person liked the structure of the pages and the visual elements of it.

The SEO improvement efforts were also successful according to the Neil Patel's SEO analyser tool used. The overall score improved from 82 to 86 out of 100 and the warnings and errors decreased. I would recommend the commissioner to add more content on the pages. Having enough content is a big factor in SEO as it can help with rankings. Unfortunately, I did not have time to work on decreasing the load time, but I recommend the commissioner to optimize the images used on the website by reducing the sizes and naming the files descriptively. I will also do this when I add the missing images to the new pages. The success of SEO improvements can also be tracked using Google Analytics. The commissioner can see if the number of visitors has increased after changes. During this project, I did not have enough time to track the if there were any changes.

Overall, I am happy with how the new pages turned out. Even though there were challenges and the main objective was not necessarily fully met, I was able to adjust the plan and work with what I had. I began to second-guess myself about adding the SEO aspect to the project, as it seemed very labour intensive. However, because of the challenge mentioned above, it ended up being a good idea as I was able to include an important aspect to this thesis despite not being able to start on the webpage creation.

I created a project plan with a schedule for myself. Because I was not able to receive the needed content for the website, the implementation for the webpage creation and design started and finished a few days later than planned. When I was not able to work with the webpage creation, I focused my time to work on the SEO improvements, which in the end worked out well. I also did not have time for another set of feedback interviews, but the commissioner seemed happy with the outcome. I had some issues to overcome in using Weebly as this was the most technical website I have had to make. Sometimes the Weebly platform was not allowing me to structure elements the way I wanted, so it took some time and effort to learn how to get it the way I planned. Along the way, I had to learn through experimenting and tutorials how to do certain things. This taught me to first learn and make sure what I can do on the platform before starting the planning and implementation.

I learned a lot more about website design and SEO throughout the process of this thesis. As I wish to work in marketing in the future, website creation, design and search engine optimization are very important skills to have. With the growing importance for websites to meet everchanging standards, it is important for me to know what to consider when designing a website to be visually attractive and highly functional. I learned different principles of website design and how to make use of them. I learned in a practical way how to do keyword research and build metadata. I knew what these were beforehand, but I did not have experience working with them. I also enjoy working with websites, so this was a valuable project for me in further developing myself for a future career in marketing.

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